

### Abstract

A method and an apparatus for retrieving images which allows easy retrieval of a desired image from an image database stored in an electronic or optical recording medium or a communication network. As the first step of searching, through the menu entry section, the user enters multi-leveled retrieval requests for the keywords associated with an image. Received the requests, the retrieval section evaluates the user's necessity for the image based on at least the entered requests and the number of the requests. Then the retrieved image is displayed on the screen, according to the calculated necessity. The method and apparatus thus provide the user with a much-needed image in order of precedence by qualifying the user's necessity for the image.